

Two for One

A new chapter is developing in the con-~~ing~~ saga of *Ramparts* magazine. After various in-~~itions~~ as a cultural quarterly, a liberal Catholic bimonthly, a New Left monthly, and post-New Left biweekly, the magazine is splitting in two. Warren Hinckle III, its president and editorial director, is leaving with two or three staff members to found *Barricades*—basically the *Ramparts* mixture-as-before, but without the \$1.5 million *Ramparts* debt.

Hinckle's plan was to announce the bankruptcy and dissolution of *Ramparts* and the birth of *Barricades* on February 4. But Frederick C. Mitchell, publisher of *Ramparts* by virtue of a \$700,000 contribution, refused to acquiesce in the bankruptcy plans, so the original *Ramparts* will survive, at least for now, to compete with *Barricades*. Mitchell joined by Robert Scheer, editor of *Ramparts*, plans to scale down the lavish expenditures, putting out a cheaper, soberer, more political magazine. Editorial decisions will reportedly be made by the whole staff as a commune, à la SDS.

Hinckle wants *Barricades* to have more muckraking, less ideology. "It will no longer be a sacrilege to slap Castro once in awhile," says one source close to the magazine. *Barricades* will also be pro-Israel. *Ramparts* has generally followed the New Left line on the conflict in the Middle East, sympathizing with the Arabs as part of the romanticized third world. Hinckle has made a name for himself through fund-raising and a carefully cultivated image as an adventurer of singular dash and verve. At the Democratic convention in Chicago, he managed to run up a \$5,000 hotel bill and threatened to rent the entire Pump Room so Water Cronkite would have to ask him for a table. Some months ago, piqued at the dearth of Manhattan taxis, he rented a car to go 17 blocks. Another night, in pursuit of a story on the Knights of Malta, he showed up in a Greenwich Village bar, disguised as a priest and shepherding a bevy of large-bosomed and tuxedoed Catholic faithful.

But rollicking adventure does not automatically produce a readable magazine, and while Hinckle was away (most of the time), the magazine was scratching for material, often throwing in Sunday supplement filler on fashions or somebody's arcane local cause. The New Left gradually lost interest, and when Hinckle rebuffed an attempt to turn *Ramparts* over to Tom Hayden, the magazine's perfidy was obvious for all to see.

Ramparts' troubles have included internal quarrels, chaotic bookkeeping, and an inability—despite superb public relations talents—to attract writers with something fresh to say. As if to compensate, the magazine has retained a love of the sportive gesture. As its "ombudsman editor," for example, it named a former member of the underworld, fresh out of Leavenworth.

Hinckle is likely to stamp his personality on *Barricades* as firmly as he did on *Ramparts*. If so, the new journal will be directed in the grand manner, with large expense accounts, a genial muckraker's indifference to the philosophy of the left, and with bundles of cash wheedled out of affluent, but somewhat guilty, urban liberals. In his first three days of fund-raising for *Barricades*, Hinckle came up with \$165,000.